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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/609,147	06/27/2003	Ronald Knegel	VPI/02-110 US	6705
27916	7590	12/27/2004	EXAMINER	
VERTEX PHARMACEUTICALS INC.			WARD, PAUL V	
130 WAVERLY STREET			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139-4242			1623	

DATE MAILED: 12/27/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/609,147	KNEGTEL ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	PAUL V WARD	1623

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-14,20 and 21 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 1-14,20 and 21 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election, without traverse, of Group I (compounds according to claim 1 of formula I, wherein X is C) in the reply filed on October 12, 2004, is acknowledged.

Accordingly, claims 15-19 and 22-33 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected subject matter, there being no allowable generic or linking claim.

Applicant reserved the right to file a divisional application to the non-elected subject matter.

An action on the merits on claims 1-14 and 20-21 is contained herein.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

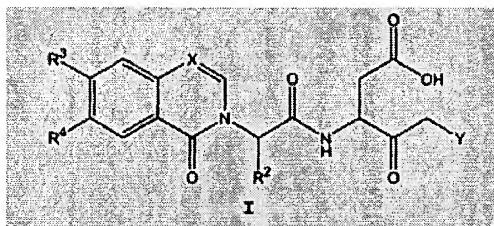
The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-14 and 20-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Golec et al. (WO 01/42216 A2).

Applicants claim compounds useful as inhibitors of caspases of general formula I:



wherein all the variables are as defined in the claim.

Golec teaches compounds useful as inhibitors of caspases sharing the same formulaic components. (See Abstract and Formula I). The compounds in the Golec reference contain the exact formula and structures, wherein Y is a halogen (F), R² is an alkyl, X is C, and R³ and R⁴ are H. (See page 13-15, Formula IA and Table I). Thus, the compounds in Golec fall within the range of the presently claim caspase inhibitor compounds. Since Golec teaches the exact compounds, Applicant claims are anticipated, and thus, rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-14 and 20-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Golec et al. (WO 01/42216 A2).

Applicants' claims are drawn to caspase inhibitor compounds.

The reference teaches a generic group of caspase inhibitor compounds, which embraces applicant's claimed compounds. (See pages 6-7, compounds of formula I IA and definitions for R¹, R², X₁, X₂ X₃, etc.). The claims differ from the reference by reciting specific species and a more limited genus than the reference. However, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to select any of the species of the genus taught by the reference, including those instantly claimed, because the skilled chemist would have the reasonable expectation that any of the species of the genus would have similar properties, and thus, the same use as taught for the genus as a whole.

One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to select the claimed compounds from the genus in the reference as a whole. A prior art disclosed genus of useful compounds is sufficient to render *prima facie* obvious a species falling with a genus.

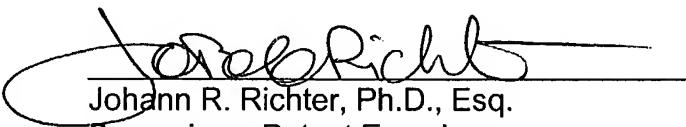
Conclusion

Claims 1-14 and 20-21 are pending. Claims 1-14 and 20-21 are rejected. No claims are allowed.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to PAUL V WARD whose telephone number is 571-272-2909. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8 am to 4 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James O Wilson can be reached on 571-272-0661. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



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